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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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I HAVE lately conſidered it as a very great misfortune, that in various papers of this work I have made no ſcruple of honeſtly confeſſing to my readers, that I look upon myſelf to be the wiſeſt and moſt learned philoſopher of this age and nation. But the word is gone forth, and I cannot retract it; nor indeed would it be fair in me to attempt it, as I find no manner of decay in my intellectual faculties, but on the contrary, that I am treaſuring up new knowledge day after day. I was aware indeed that ſuch a confeſſion, given modeſtly and voluntarily under my own hand, and confirmed almoſt every week by a moſt excellent eſſay, would gain univerſal

verſal belief, and bring upon me the envy of the weak and malicious; but with all my penetration, I was far from foreſeeing the many inconveniences to which it has ſubjected me.

My lodgings are crowded almoſt every morning with learned ladies of all ranks, who, like ſo many queens of Sheba, are come from afar to hear the wiſdom of Solomon: but it happens a little unfortunately, that though my anſwers to their queſtions give equal ſatisfaction with thoſe of that monarch, yet the gold, and the ſpices, and the precious ſtones, which were the reward of his wiſdom, are never ſo much as offered me.

In the families which I viſit abroad, a profound ſilence is obſerved as ſoon as I enter the room; ſo that inſtead of mixing in a free and eaſy converſation, I labour under all the diſadvantages of a king, by being ſo unfortunately circumſtanced as to have no equal.

I have endeavoured by ſtratagem to remove theſe inconveniences, and have frequently written a very dull paper, that my companions may imagine they have caught me tripping, and be induced to converſe with me as with other men: but they find out my deſign, and are ſo far from applying to me the *aliquando bonus dormitat homerus*, that they regard me as a prodigy whereever I am ſeen. Mrs. Fitz-Adam indeed, who is leſs in awe of me than perhaps I would ſometimes chuſe, and who is of a communicative diſpoſition, never fails to inform me how the world goes on: ſhe alſo encourages her maid Betty (who is a very knowing body in all family concerns) to beſtow upon me, as ſhe waits at table, her whole ſtock of intelligence; which if I had a mind to be perſonal, would contribute greatly to the entertainment of theſe papers. I ought not to conceal

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that I owe the freedom with which this girl treats me, to the ſmall opinion ſhe has conceived of my parts; having been often urged by her to turn the WORLD into a news-paper, for that then there would be truth in it, and ſomething worth reading.

AT the coffee-houſes I am ſtill more perplexed than in private families: for as every man there is a politician, and as I have incautiouſly declared in print that I am a conſummate maſter of that ſcience, I am ſurrounded at my enterance by all the company in the room, and queſtioned by twenty voices at once on the ſtate of public affairs. I am drawn into an ambuſcade with general Braddock, and kept in cloſe confinement with admiral Byng. Ruſſia and Pruſſia, though our very good friends and allies, have declared war upon my quiet, and the national Militia has beaten me out of doors. To plead ignorance upon theſe occaſions would be highly unbecoming a lover of truth, who has given it under his hand that he knows every thing; and to diſcover all I know, might, as matters ſtand at preſent, be a little imprudent. I am therefore a ſilent hearer of all the queſtions that are aſked me, till having tired them with my taciturnity, I am ſuffered to eſcape.

To remedy this inconvenience, and as I am a great walker, I now and then take a ſtroll to the coffee-houſes about Moor-fields and Cripplegate, where, if not my name, my perſon at leaſt is unknown. At theſe places I have the good fortune of being an uninterrupted hearer of all that paſſes; and I cannot ſufficiently expreſs the pleaſure I receive at ſeeing ſo many worthy tradeſmen and mechanics met together every evening for the good

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of their country, and each of them laying down a ſyſtem of politics, that would do honour to the ſagacity of the ableſt adminiſtration.

I AM tempted to take theſe walks rather oftener than is agreeable to me, to avoid certain inconveniences at home, which my wonderful abilities are almoſt continually ſubjecting me to. The political writers are at preſent a very numerous body; and as they cannnot but take notice that I am making no pecuniary advantage of my great knowledge in public affairs, and are thoroughly ſenſible that a very ſmall part of it would make a rich figure in a twelve-penny pamphlet, they are continually teazing me (according to the ſchool-boy's phraſe) for a little ſenſe: but whatever ſenſe the readers of thoſe pamphlets may chance to find in them, I can truly aſſure them that it is none of mine. The conſtituents of boroughs are alſo very importunate with me for letters of inſtruction to their ſeveral members: but though I entirely approve of this cuſtom, and think it highly neceſſary that every gentleman in parliament ſhould be inſtructed by his conſtituents in the true intereſt of his country, yet I beg to be excuſed from meddling with ſuch matters, and content myſelf with diſmiſſing the ſaid conſtituents with one word of advice, which is, that in all their remonſtrances to their members, they would touch as ſlightly as poſſible upon the grievance of corruption; it being, in my private opinion, quarrelling with their bread and butter.

To ballance all this weight of inconveniences, I have nothing but a little vanity to throw into the ſcale: for to confeſs a very ſerious truth, the happineſs I enjoy is more owing to my great virtue, than my great knowledge; and were it not for my good will to mankind, who will

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not ſuffer themſelves to be inſtructed by any other hand, I would part with my wiſdom at a very eaſy price, and be as ignorant as the beſt of them.

THE value of every acquiſition is only to be eſtimated by it's uſe; and every body knows, that in the commerce with the world, an ounce of cunning is worth a pound of ſenſe. I am ſorry to ſay it, but the whiſtle, the top, the hobby-horſe and the raree-ſhow, have adminiſtered more delight to my boyiſh days (for I have been a boy as well as others) than all the treaſures of learning and philoſophy have done to my riper years. Thoſe pleaſures, in time, gave way to others of a higher nature; and the facetious Mr. Punch took his turn to entertain me. The theatres at laſt attracted all my attention. There, while my imagination was cheated, and real kings and queens, in all the magnificence of royalty, ſeemed to be exhibiting themſelves to my view, my delight was inexpreſſible. But reaſon and knowledge ſoon combining againſt me, ſhewed me that all was deception; and in conjunction with a demon, called taſte, ſuggeſted to me at one time the weakneſs of the performance, and at another the incapacity of the actors, till in the end, nothing but a Shakeſpear and a Garrick had power to entertain me.

THUS driven by too much refinement from all the pleaſures of youth, I had recourſe to thoſe deep and profound ſtudies, that have ſince made me the object of my own wonder, and the aſtoniſhment of mankind. But alas! how ineffectual and unſatisfying are all human acquiſitions! The abilities that will forever make my memory revered, are robbing me of my enjoyment; and beſides the evils that I have already enumerated, I am regretting in the beſt company that I cannot enjoy the